

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A method for providing access to data files stored in a data repository comprising the steps of:
- receiving a request for a data file from a requester ~~said request specifying at least one data format;~~
  - determining if said requester is authorized to access said requested data file;
  - displaying at least one available data format selected from a list of stored data formats, said at least one available data format selectable by said requester;
  - translating the requested data file from a stored data format into a requester-selected data format~~said requested data format responsive to said receiving of said request from said requester, if said stored format differs from said requested format;~~ and
  - making said translated data file accessible to said requester if it is determined that said requester is authorized.
2. (original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said data files include graphical information.
3. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1 wherein said requester-selected requested data format represents a version of the data file that is compatible with a particular software application environment for using the requested data file.
4. (original) A method according to claim 1 wherein the repository resides behind a secure firewall, and further including the steps of:
- providing a meta data directory outside of said firewall; said meta data directory indicating the contents of the repository.
5. (original) A method according to claim 4 further including the step of:

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providing periodic updates of said meta data directory, said updates reflecting changes to data in the data repository.

6. (original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said determining step further including the steps of:

providing an access control element including data indicating whether a requester is to be permitted to access said requested data file.

7. (original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said repository resides behind a secure firewall and wherein said translated data file is retained at a response repository outside of said firewall in response to said request.

8. (original) A method according to claim 7 wherein said data file is retained at said response repository for a predetermined time period.

9. (original) A method according to claim 8 wherein said data file is accessible from said response repository by any authorized requester.

10. (original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said repository resides behind a secure firewall the method further comprising the steps of:

providing an access control system outside of said firewall for receiving said request for said data file;

determining via said access control system if the requested data file is stored in the repository; and

passing said request to said repository if said requester is authorized and said requested data file is stored in said repository.

11. (original) A method according to claim 10 wherein said translated data file is retained

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at a response repository outside of said firewall in response to said request.

12. (original) A method according to claim 11 wherein said translated data file is retained at said response repository for a predetermined time period.

13. (original) A method according to claim 12 wherein said translated data file is accessible from said response repository by any authorized requester.

14. (original) A method according to claim 13 wherein said translating step is undertaken at said response repository.

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15. (currently amended) A method according to claim 14 wherein said translated data file retained at said response repository ~~may be~~ further translated into an alternative data format selectable from at least one available data format in said list of stored data formats, said alternative data format selected by an authorized requester based upon requests from said authorized requesters.

16. (currently amended) A method according to claim 10 further including the steps of:  
receiving said request at a staging database within said firewall;  
determining based on said received request which of said stored data formats is to be used to perform said translating into said requested datafile format; and  
using the results of said determination to retrieve the data file having the determined format from said repository.

17. (original) A method according to claim 16 further comprising the step of:  
providing said translated data file from said repository to said staging database.

18. (original) A method according to claim 17 wherein said access control system includes

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a response repository and wherein said translated data file is transferred from said staging database to said response repository and retained at the response repository in response to said request.

19. (original) A method according to claim 18 wherein said translated data file is retained at said response repository for a predetermined time period.

20. (original) A method according to claim 19 wherein said translated data file is accessible from said response repository by any authorized requester.

21. (original) A method according to claim 1 further comprising the steps of:  
providing the requester with the status of the fulfillment of the request for the data file.

22. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1 further comprising the step[s] of:  
~~providing an indication of stored formats for the requested data file; and~~  
storing a requester's format preferences for the requested data file.

23. (currently amended) A program storage device readable by a digital processing apparatus and tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the digital processing apparatus to perform method steps for providing access to data files stored in a data repository, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving a request for a data file from a requester ~~said request specifying at least one data format;~~

determining if said requester is authorized to access said requested data file;

displaying at least one available data format selected from a list of stored data formats, said at least one available data format selectable by said requester;

translating the requested data file from a stored data format into a requester-selected

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~~data format~~ said requested data format responsive to said receiving of said request from said requester, if said stored format differs from said requested format; and

making said translated data file accessible to said requester if it is determined that said requester is authorized.

24. (original) A program storage device according to claim 23 wherein said data files include graphical information.

25. (currently amended) A program storage device according to claim 23 wherein said ~~requester-selected~~ requested data format represents a version of the data file that is compatible with a particular software application environment for using the requested data file.

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26. (original) A program storage device according to claim 23 wherein the repository resides behind a secure firewall, and further including the steps of:  
providing a meta data directory outside of said firewall; said meta data directory indicating the contents of the repository.

27. (original) A program storage device according to claim 26 further including the step of:  
providing periodic updates of said meta data directory, said updates reflecting changes to data in the data repository.

28. (original) A program storage device according to claim 23 wherein said determining step further including the steps of:  
providing an access control element including data indicating whether a requester is to be permitted to access said requested data file.

29. (original) A program storage device according to claim 23 wherein said repository

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resides behind a secure firewall and wherein said translated data file is retained at a response repository outside of said firewall in response to said request.

30. (original) A program storage device according to claim 29 wherein said data file is retained at said response repository for a predetermined time period.

31. (original) A program storage device according to claim 30 wherein said data file is accessible from said response repository by any authorized requester.

32. (original) A program storage device according to claim 23 wherein said repository resides behind a secure firewall the method further comprising the steps of:

providing an access control system outside of said firewall for receiving said request for said data file;

determining via said access control system if the requested data file is stored in the repository; and

passing said request to said repository if said requester is authorized and said requested data file is stored in said repository.

33. (original) A program storage device according to claim 32 wherein said translated data file is retained at a response repository outside of said firewall in response to said request.

34. (original) A program storage device according to claim 33 wherein said translated data file is retained at said response repository for a predetermined time period.

35. (original) A program storage device according to claim 34 wherein said translated data file is accessible from said response repository by any authorized requester.

36. (original) A program storage device according to claim 35 wherein said translating step

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is undertaken at said response repository.

37. (currently amended) A program storage device according to claim 36 wherein said translated data file retained at said response repository ~~may be~~ further translated into an alternative data format selectable from at least one available data format in said list of stored data formats, said alternative data format selected by an authorized requester based upon requests from said authorized requesters.

38. (currently amended) A program storage device according to claim 32 further including the steps of:

receiving said request at a staging database within said firewall;  
determining based on said received request which of said stored data formats is to be used to perform said translating into said requested data file format; and  
using the results of said determination to retrieve the data file having the determined format from said repository.

39. (original) A program storage device according to claim 38 further comprising the step of:

providing said translated data file from said repository to said staging database.

40. (original) A program storage device according to claim 39 wherein said access control system includes a response repository and wherein said translated data file is transferred from said staging database to said response repository and retained at the response repository in response to said request.

41. (original) A program storage device according to claim 40 wherein said translated data file is retained at said response repository for a predetermined time period.

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42. (original) A program storage device according to claim 41 wherein said translated data file is accessible from said response repository by any authorized requester.

43. (original) A program storage device according to claim 23 further comprising the steps of:

providing the requester with the status of the fulfillment of the request for the data file.

44. (currently amended) A program storage device according to claim 23 further comprising the step[s] of:

~~providing an indication of stored formats for the requested data file; and~~  
storing a requester's format preferences for the requested data file.

45. (currently amended) An apparatus for providing access to data files stored in a data repository, said apparatus comprising:

an interface element for receiving a request for a data file from a requester; ~~said request specifying at least one data format;~~

an access profile database storing a list of data formats;

an access control logic coupled to said interface for determining if said requester is authorized to access said requested data file;

a translation engine coupled to said access control logic for translating the requested data file from a stored data format into a requester-selected said requested data format, said requester-selected data format selected from said list of data formats responsive to said receiving of said request from said requester, if said stored format differs from said requested format; and

a storage element coupled to said translation engine for making said translated data file accessible to said requester if it is determined that said requester is authorized.